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## 4.7 Conclusions and Recommendations

Key effectiveness conclusions and recommendations are presented in Tabular format in Table 4.9

**Table 4.9 Key conclusions and recommendations on ‘Effectiveness’ evaluation activity (IIIa1): extent to which PA4 projects will contribute to the achievement of the objectives and indicators established by PA4**

Eval. Activity	Conclusions		Recommendations	Targeted At	Time-frame (S, M, L) <sup>33</sup>
IIIa1	1	The contracted PA4 projects (to 31 <sup>st</sup> Dec.2009) are coherent with the stated operational objectives/indicators of the KAIs 4.1 and 4.2.			
	2	The currently contracted ‘strategic’ projects should make a substantial contribution to achievement of the PA4 KAI objectives of improving and increasing: the range of PES services; PES labour market forecasting and impact-assessment capacity; and staff competencies.			
IIIa1	3	PA4 projects are essential for the modernization of the PES nationally, particularly within the worsened economic climate and funding constraints.			

<sup>33</sup> S – short; M – medium; L- long



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Eval. Activity	Conclusions		Recommendations	Targeted At	Time-frame (S, M, L) <sup>33</sup>
4	The potential contribution of contracted projects (to 31 <sup>st</sup> Dec.2009) has been constrained by a slow rate of implementation due to internal PES project-management issues		Immediately redress and resolve any inconsistencies in the legislative framework that impinge on project implementation <sup>34</sup> .	NAE , NAE IB and MA	S
5	Staff in CAEs needs capacity-building training to develop proposals.		Training to be provided for staff in CAEs to design project proposals and prepare ESF SOPHRD project applications.	NAE IB & CAEs	M
			TA to be used to facilitate additional support and training in project management to contracted projects.	NAE IB	M

<sup>34</sup> The NAE-IB reports that since the cut-off date for this evaluation, procedures have been agreed that resolve the project management issues for currently contracted projects, and for future projects.



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## 5. OVERARCHING CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 5.1 Introduction

These findings from the ad hoc evaluation of the modernization of the PES have been presented in this Section 2-4 of this report. Findings from specific evaluation activities on PES relevance, efficiency and effectiveness were presented, together with conclusions and recommendations on each sub-question. Some common overarching issues emerged from the individual evaluation activities; these can be grouped within three broad topics:

- PA4 focus and eligible activities
- PES strategy
- Policy and focus on active labour market measures

The findings, conclusions and recommendations for each of these are presented below in Table 5.1.



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## 5.2 Overarching conclusions & recommendations

Summary Findings	Overarching Conclusion	Recommendation	Targeted At	Timeframe (S, M, L) <sup>35</sup>
<b>(1) PA4 focus and eligible activities</b>				
Changes in the past two years in the socio-economic context and in the structure of the labour market have impacted heavily and negatively on the PES; these include the decline in employment, increase in unemployment and fewer notified job vacancies. These changes have resulted in an increased number of job-seeking and unemployed clients for the PES and increased demand for PES services. The evaluation concluded that the majority of the FDI eligible activities for the PA4 – Modernisation of the PES continue to be relevant in the light of the changed socio-economic context, and many are even more relevant.	The focus of PA4 within the SOPHRD was primarily on improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the PES organization and system (e.g. the NAE, CAEs and RTCs) with a strong focus on improving methods/instruments/ of service delivery, and staff competencies. However, as a result of the changed socio-economic context, there is a now a strong argument for prioritising within PA4, projects that target directly potential and actual PES clients, particularly unemployed, job seekers, and inactive or vulnerable persons.	Priority to be given in future PA4 projects/call for proposals to projects that target directly potential and actual PES clients, particularly unemployed, job seekers, and inactive or vulnerable persons.	NAE IB & NAE	M

<sup>35</sup> S – short; M – medium; L- long



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Summary Findings	Overarching Conclusion	Recommendation	Targeted At	Timeframe (S, M, L) <sup>35</sup>
(2) PES strategy				



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Summary Findings	Overarching Conclusion	Recommendation	Targeted At	Timeframe (S, M, L) <sup>35</sup>
<p>Changed socio-economic context has increased the relevance for both job-seekers and employers of certain PES services, particularly registration, information, guidance, mediation, training, and employment supports. However, the changed socio-economic context has also caused a decrease in the quality and scale of these services; primarily due to the combined demands of an increased number of clients (particularly registered unemployed), an increased range of client needs, and PES budget reductions and staffing constraints. Similarly the evaluation has identified that the match between PES services and employment needs is constrained by a lack of labour market forecasting capacity; and that lack of adequate performance management information hampers the ability to judge the cost-efficiency of specific PES services.</p>	<p>The PES is currently operating within an increasing challenging environment that requires a strategic and multi-faceted approach.</p> <p>The planned activities within the nineteen<sup>36</sup> PA4 SOPHRD contracted projects SOPHRD will address some of the PES modernization challenges and needs identified by internal and external stakeholders.</p> <p>However their likely effectiveness will be diminished by the absence of an overall coherent PES strategy. Such a strategy would assist in better focusing of resources.</p>	<p>Develop an overall PES strategic plan (with a regional dimension) for its activities within the next three years, to optimize output in the light of budget constraints and competing pressures.</p> <p>PES to use KAI 4.1 PA4 SOPHRD to develop a Strategic Plan.</p>	<p>NAE</p> <p>NAE &amp; IB-NAE.</p>	<p>M</p> <p>M</p>



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Summary Findings	Overarching Conclusion	Recommendation	Targeted At	Timeframe (S, M, L) <sup>35</sup>
<b>(3) Policy and focus on active labour market measures</b>				
<p>The increased numbers of registered unemployed has made significant demands on the Employment Insurance Funds, with a resulting decrease in funding for active labour market measures. However a range of active labour market measures are required to meet the needs of current and potential PES clients.</p>	<p>In light of the worsened socio-economic situation future PES strategy should include a targeted activation programme for registered unemployed, job seekers and inactive persons in rural areas. However this requires also being part of wider national policy on activation and labour market measures. PES could endmaximise the potential contribution of SOPHRD in this context, through drawing on the resources and activities available (either as project promoters or as partners in projects) within PA5 – ‘Promoting active employment measures’ and PA6 – ‘Promoting social inclusion’.</p>	<p>Design and develop a pilot targeted activation programme for unemployed persons within KAI 4.1 PA4 SOPHRD, based on lessons learned and good practice from other EU countries.</p> <p>Consider potential for linkages with PA5 and PA6 SOPHRD in development of targeted activation programme</p>	<p>NAE &amp; NAE IB, with Ministry of Labour, &amp; MA SOPHRD</p> <p>NAE &amp; NAE IB, with Ministry of Labour, &amp; MA SOPHRD</p>	<p>M</p> <p>M</p>



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### 5.3 Concluding comments

This ad hoc evaluation has identified that the PES in Romania is faced with significant challenges resulting from the changed socio-economic context since the design of the original SOPHRD. We conclude that there is a continued need to improve the relevance and efficiency of PES services as part of a modernisation process. Projects and activities with PA4 SOPHRD could potentially contribute significantly to this process. However, the overall contribution to date of PA4 has been limited due to delays in the process for selecting, contracting and implementing projects, and the evaluation has highlighted a range of factors that have caused delays in the overall absorption of PA4 funds. The NAE IB reports that progress has been made since the cut off date of this evaluation in addressing issues that have delayed implementation of contracted PA4 projects (to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2009), and that will ensure that delays will not occur in implementation of future projects. We believe that the PES and its services are of increasing importance in this time of economic crisis. Every effort should therefore be made to ensure that use of PA4 funding is effectively maximised, for the remaining period of the SOPHRD, to assist the PES more effectively meet the needs of an increasing number of unemployed persons, job seekers and employers for a range of employment services.